

Meeting 16 April 2021 13:00

Members attending:

John Scott QC, Solicitor Advocate (Chair)
Bruce Adamson, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland
Ephraim Borowski, Chair of the National Independent Strategic Advisory Group
Gill Imery, HM Chief Inspector of Constabulary in Scotland (HMICS)
John Logue, Deputy Crown Agent Operational Support, COPFS
Naomi McAuliffe, Programme Director Scotland, Amnesty International
Professor Susan McVie, University of Edinburgh
Assistant Chief Constable Gary Ritchie, Police Scotland
Brian Scott, Glasgow Disability Alliance
Barry Sillers, Deputy Chief Executive, Strategy and Performance, SPA

In attendance

Assistant Chief Constable John Hawkins
Kirsty Louise Campbell, Head of Strategy and Innovation, Police Scotland
Davina Fereday, Research and Insight Manager, Police Scotland
Amanda Coulthard, Head of Strategy and Performance, SPA

Apologies:

Aamer Anwar, Solicitor and Human Rights campaigner
Tressa Burke, CEO Glasgow Disability Alliance
Maria Galli, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland
CS Linda Jones, Police Scotland
Dr Elizabeth Kelly, Associate Carnegie UK Trust
Deputy Chief Constable Will Kerr, Police Scotland
Diego Quiroz, Scottish Human Rights Commission

Secretariat:

Jennifer Blackwood, SPA
Eleanor Gaw, SPA

Karen Vallance, SPA

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chair welcomed members of the group and attendees to the meeting. Apologies were noted. The Chair welcomed ACC Hawkins, Kirsty Louise Campbell and Davina Fereday from Police Scotland, presenting at item 3.

2. Note of the previous meeting and matters arising.

The Chair reviewed the note of the previous meeting. He highlighted the updates received last weekend from CS Sean Scott on the policing response to public gatherings in Edinburgh, and from Dr Elizabeth Kelly regarding the pausing of Scottish Government daily briefings.

3. Police Scotland's approach to understanding and enhancing public confidence during the pandemic, key findings and next steps

ACC Hawkins introduced the presentation of Police Scotland's approach to public confidence recording, and the impact of the experiences of the last year. Public confidence is reported in the wider societal sense of the public relationship with policing. Public satisfaction figures however, are based on feedback from those who have engaged with police services directly during the period. Overall, public confidence tends to be lower than levels of satisfaction with policing. It was reported however, that public confidence in policing is now 9% higher than this time last year.

A presentation was shared with the group. ACC Hawkins summarised the strategic approach and policing's governance arrangements for understanding and strengthening public confidence.

Kirsty Louise Campbell and Davina Fereday summarised policing's survey and engagement work, and the insights from the resulting data. The presentation also focused on work to understand the user experience among seldom heard groups, enhancing the engagement approach, and policing's commitment to use evidence to support future engagement, and inform policy and practice

The group discussed how confidence in policing is impacted by wider societal factors. It was noted that the public confidence survey does also take account of whether people have had direct contact with police, which allows for a separate analysis of confidence levels among this group.

The group discussed BAME classifications, and noted that Police Scotland use the same classification system as Scottish Government.

ACC Hawkins informed the group that the use of a seldom heard voices category enables Police Scotland to include information on additional groupings. The group acknowledged that seldom heard voices are hard to reach in any research, but the data collated by Police Scotland was reported as being much more detailed than for police services across England.

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The group asked about intersectionality of the data for seldom heard groups and disability. Davina Fereday confirmed that Police Scotland can undertake this type of analysis on intersectionality between groups, but noted that it would not be possible to break this down further, for example, by type of disability.

The group were also informed that divisional dashboards are provided to local commanders monthly, to provide specific local data on public confidence and user satisfaction. Additional targeted analysis was undertaken early on to understand local impacts. This took place first in the North East, when it became the first area to enter local lockdown.

ACC Hawkins summarised the work undertaken internally by officers to engage with victims of crime. It was noted that the definition of what it means to be a victim of crime has changed which has impacted recording, so data over time is not always comparable.

The group discussed the extent of dialogue with children and young people, with regard to their relationship with, and experience of, policing. Overall, Bruce Adamson indicated that his discussions with young people had been largely positive about policing, and that policing has not emerged as a major concern for this group during the pandemic. Enhanced digital engagement with children and young people was noted as a potential future improvement.

The Chair thanked ACC Hawkins, Kirsty Louise Campbell and Davina Fereday for attending and for their input.

ACC Hawkins, Kirsty Louise Campbell, Davina Fereday, Bruce Adamson and Naomi McAuliffe left the meeting.

4. Easing of restrictions - issues arising, including travel

The Chair noted that the current easing of restrictions marked the 20th amendment to the current regulations. ACC Ritchie briefed members that the service was anticipating a busy weekend, and was prepared for the gradual easing of regulations.

The period of easing regulations was noted as the most challenging time for service response. It was agreed that easing of restrictions would be a standing item at future meetings.

Action: Secretariat / Chair to include in agenda planning

5. Data Update -

OpTICAL Update

Susan McVie updated the group on the recent meeting of OpTICAL and provided the following specific updates from the previous week;

- A report from Professor McVie, informed by Crown Office data on charges reported to COPFS under the Coronavirus Regulations and the outcome of these charges, will be circulated to the group for discussion at next week's meeting.

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Action: Secretariat / ALL

- Data on fixed penalty notices in England and Wales were discussed at OpTICAL. While not directly comparable, rates per 100,000 for interventions in Scotland are similar to Wales, and slightly higher than in England. Overall trends in terms of pattern of enforcement are similar. A brief report will be provided to the next OpTICAL group.
- The weekly data report shows a reduction in the number of interventions, following a significant increase over the Easter weekend.
- The main concern over the next few weeks is likely to be the impact of easing of restrictions including travel restrictions.

Citizen Space

Jennifer Blackwood reported that one additional Citizen Space response has been received.

Officer and staff interviews

Gill Imery reported that the question set for officer and staff interviews has been agreed, and all preparations are in place for these to begin 26 April.

6. AOCB

The group noted that the Supreme Court will hear the case regarding the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Act, and members will continue to monitor progress.

Date of next meeting

Friday 23 April 2021 – 13:00 – 15:00

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